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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/626,954	07/27/2000	Frederick W. Ryan JR.	F-173	9430

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Pitney Bowes Inc
Intellectual Property and
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EXAMINER

WOO, RICHARD SUKYOON

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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3629

DATE MAILED: 01/31/2003

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

09/626,954

Applicant(s)

RYAN, FREDERICK W.

Examiner

Richard Woo

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 01 November 2002.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-44 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
- 11) ☒ The proposed drawing correction filed on 01 November 2002 is: a) ☒ approved b) ☐ disapproved by the Examiner
If approved, corrected drawings are required in reply to this Office action.
- 12) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application).
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 15) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) 7. 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Response to Arguments

- 1) This office action is in response to Applicant's amendment filed on October 15, 2002.
- 2) With respect to rejections of Claims 1-19, the Applicant's argument that the cited references fail to disclose the registration ID number associated with a previously defined delivery address is persuasive. Additionally, the Applicant's argument with respect to the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 112 is persuasive.
- 3) The text of those sections of Title 35, U.S. Code not included in this action can be found in a prior Office action.

Double Patenting

- 4) Claims 27 and 40 are objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate of claims 8 and 31, respectively. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

- 5) Claims 1-3, 4, 9, 15-16, 19-20, 22, 28, 30, 34, 39, and 42 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stier et al. (US 6,428,219) in view of Andrews et al. (WO 01/69914).

Stier et al. discloses a method of operating a data center (128) for generating postage indicium information for use with printing a postage indicium on a business reply mail piece (col. 6, lines 26-67; for the mail campaign sender), the method comprising the steps of:

receiving postage indicium information at the postage metering system from the data center (128);

printing the postage indicium on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system (122, 124) using the postage indicium information; and

printing the delivery address on the business reply mail piece at the postage metering system (see Figs. 5-9).

However, Stier et al. does not specifically disclose the method comprising:
generating a registration ID number corresponding to the delivery address;
wherein the delivery address has been selected, by the data center from a plurality of delivery addresses previously defined by the mail campaign sender;

wherein the registration ID number is used by the user to print a postal indicium on the business reply mail piece including data relating to the delivery address;

receiving a subsidy provided by the data center to the user of the postage metering system for mailing the business reply mail piece; and

providing a notification to the mail campaign sender when the business reply mail piece is posted by the user.

Andrews et al. teaches, for method of mailing or shipping goods using a registration ID number, that the method comprises:

generating a registration ID number corresponding to the delivery address of the customer (see Figs.);

wherein the delivery address has been selected, by the data center (52);

wherein the registration ID number is used by the shipper to print a postal indicium on the goods including data relating to the delivery address (see Fig. 13);

receiving a subsidy provided by the data center to the shipper or user of the postage metering system for mailing the goods; and

providing a notification to the merchant when the goods are posted by the user (pp. 19-20).

It would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art, to modify the method of operating a postage metering system such that the registration ID number corresponding to the delivery address is previously defined by the mail campaign sender, the user of the postage metering system prints the postage indicium (related to the delivery address) on the business reply mail piece, and the user receives a subsidy provided by the data center for mailing the business reply mail piece, as taught by Andrews et al., for the purpose of providing the receiver (of the business reply mail piece) of a level of anonymity not possible by transacting real addresses over the internet and implementing the efficient data base system for the user of the postage metering system (the user may store the registration

ID number and associated with actual delivery address in a database and maintain the database of the registration ID numbers and associated actual addresses for future use).

Stier et al., as modified by Andrews et al., further discloses a memory device accessible by a computer system, which enables the method Claims as recited above.

6) Claims 8, 14, 17-18, 21, 23-27, 33, 35-38, 41, and 43-44 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stier et al. and Andrews et al. as applied to claims 1, 3, 4, 9, 15, 16, and 22 above, and further in view of Allott, III (US 6,121,565).

The modified Stier et al. discloses the method and device as recited above, but does not expressly disclose the invention further comprising:

receiving the subsidy when the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period defined by the mail campaign sender; and

providing a warning to for attempting to reply after the expiration date.

Allott, III teaches, for a method of delivery a business reply mail piece using expiring indicia, that the method comprises:

providing a subsidy for mailing the business reply mail piece when the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period (see Figs. and summary of the invention);

receiving an expiration date from the mail campaign sender; and

providing a warning to for attempting to reply after the expiration date.

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Since Allott and the modified system and method of Stier et al. are both from the same field of endeavor, the purpose disclosed by Allott would have been well recognized in the pertinent art of the modified Stier et al..

Accordingly, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art, to utilize the delivery system using expiring indicia with a manifested time in the modified mail delivery system of Stier et al., as taught by Allott, for the purpose of providing extremely effective method of decreasing the time between billing and remittance by positively reinforcing early return of business reply mail piece.

7) Claims 5-6, 10-12, 29, 31 and 40 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stier et al. and Andrews et al. as applied to claims 4 and 9 above, and further in view of Kramer (US 6,282,524).

The modified method of Stier et al. discloses the invention as recited earlier, but does not specifically disclose the invention comprising the limitations of claims of 5-6, 10-12, 29, 31 and 40.

Kramer teaches, for the method of operating a postage metering system for printing a postage indicium, that the method includes the step of performing address hygiene on the delivery address and transmitting a hygiene address to the sender.

Since Kramer and the modified Stier et al. are both from the same field of endeavor, the purpose disclosed by Kramer would have been well recognized in the pertinent art of Stier et al..

Accordingly, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art, to perform address hygiene on the delivery address of the modified Stier et al., as taught by Kramer, for the purpose of ensuring more accurate delivery and qualifying the postage for automation discounts offered by the postal service and making available to the indicia's linking control methods.

8) Claims 7, 13, and 32 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Stier et al., Andrews et al. and Kramer, as applied to claims 6 and 12 above, and further in view of Allott.

The modified Stier et al. discloses the method as recited above, but does not expressly disclose the invention further comprising:

receiving the subsidy when the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period defined by the mail campaign sender; and
providing a warning to for attempting to reply after the expiration date.

Allott, III teaches, for a method of delivery a business reply mail piece using expiring indicia, that the method comprises:

providing a subsidy for mailing the business reply mail piece when the business reply mail piece is posted within a specified time period (see Figs. and summary of the invention);

receiving an expiration date from the mail campaign sender; and
providing a warning to for attempting to reply after the expiration date.

Since Allott and the modified system and method of Stier et al. are both from the same field of endeavor, the purpose disclosed by Allott would have been well recognized in the pertinent art of the modified Stier et al..

Accordingly, it would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art, to utilize the delivery system using expiring indicia with a manifested time in the modified mail delivery system of Stier et al., as taught by Allott, for the purpose of providing extremely effective method of decreasing the time between billing and remittance by positively reinforcing early return of business reply mail piece.

Conclusion


9) Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Richard Woo whose telephone number is 703-308-7830. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday from 8:30 AM -5:00 PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, John Weiss can be reached on 703-308-2702. The fax phone numbers for

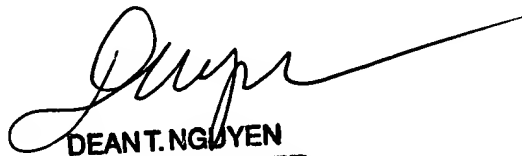
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the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned are 703-305-7687 for regular communications and 703-308-3691 for After Final communications.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-0861.



Richard Woo
Patent Examiner
GAU 3629.
January 25, 2003



DEANT. NGUYEN
PRIMARY EXAMINER